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SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER DISCUSSES IDENTIFICATION

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[11](#). (U) SUMMARY. On May 14, Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny addressed the nation on the televised evening news and confirmed reports that the Ministry of Justice will begin pilot identification programs on May 18. Banny also announced that identification and disarmament (DDR) would occur simultaneously but did not indicate a start date for DDR. END SUMMARY

[12](#). (U) Banny's presentation outlined several key points without providing many details. The target audience for the pilot programs will be Ivoirians and foreigners born in Cote d'Ivoire, whose births were not properly registered. The minimum age to participate in the program is 13 and all participants will receive a birth certificate. Ivoirians meeting the legal standards of citizenship will also receive a certificate of nationality. Banny was careful to explain that, although the pilot process will provide these two key documents, it will not provide identity cards.

[13](#). (U) Banny also announced that the Minister of Justice, Mamadou Kone, would hold a press conference on the pilot project on May 15. According to the Minister's spokesperson, Kone will provide more details about the logistics of the pilot identification program so that the populations in the targeted cities will be able to properly prepare. (Note: the press conference is scheduled for 1500 local time.)

[14](#). (U) There has been little reaction in the press from the political parties since the announcement. President Gbagbo, in a May 14 interview with the UN radio station, spoke disparagingly of the pilot project, saying it's a way for individuals to tell a judge "I'm an Ivoirian but I have no papers to prove it." He conceded, however, that he had signed off on the project in the Council of Ministers and that his concerns were about the logistical details.

DDR) maybe not simultaneous) but moving forward
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[15](#). (SBU) The Coordinator for the National Program for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (PNDDR) will host a meeting May 15, to finalize his recommendations for the start of disarmament. Jean Malan, Head of Operations for the PNDDR, confirmed that General Philippe Mangou, Chief-of-Staff of the Ivoirian Armed Forces (FANCI) would meet with General Hamed Bakayoko, his New Forces (NF) counterpart, at the Prime Minister's office on May 17. At the meeting, the PNDDR Coordinator General, Ouassenan Kone, is expected to present his new timeline for disarmament. According to Malan, both General Mangou and General Bakayoko intend to sign an agreement to begin DDR in compliance with the new timeline. Malan was unwilling to provide any additional details.

[16](#). (SBU) COMMENT: Banny finally seems to be shifting into

gear. It is likely that his meetings in Washington and Brussels and the looming International Working Group (IWG) meeting have spurred him to take concrete action so as to avoid embarrassment. If the identification process actually begins on May 18 and the DDR meeting comes off, Banny will have something substantial to report to the IWG on May 19. However, it is important to note that this initiative is a pilot project that does not issue ID cards. It is a timid first step in the direction of issuing ID cards, which will be required for voter registration, and which the NF is demanding as a precondition for DDR.

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